

Message Text

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USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY DOHA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 0210

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP (PERCY, CHARLES)

SUBJ: SENATOR PERCY'S VISIT: POLITICAL ISSUES

REF: TEHRAN 169 (NOTAL)

1. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS, SENATOR PERCY DREW OUT MINISTERS AMOUZEGAR AND ANSARY AND ISRAELI REPRESENTATIVE LUBRANI ON FOLLOWING TOPICS. THIS REPORT IS UNCLEARED AND SUBJECT TO REVISION BY SENATOR.

A. GOI ATTITUDE TOWARDS ARAB-ISRAEL CONFRONTATION.

ALL THREE AGREED OR ASSUMED THAT IRANIAN POSITION WAS BASICALLY UNCHANGED, I.E., IRAN WOULD NOT HELP ARABS MILITARILY AGAINST ISRAEL AND WOULD NOT JOIN OIL EMBARGO. LUBRANI THOUGHT THAT IRAN WAS WOOING ARABS, ESPECIALLY EGYPT, TO SEEK SUPPORT IN IRAN-IRAQ DIFFICULTIES AND TO BOLSTER IRANIAN POSITION IN GULF. QUIET COOPERATION WITH ISRAEL CONTINUED, HE NOTED, DESPITE POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES.

B. PALESTINIAN STATES:

AMOUZEGAR AND ANSARY THOUGHT CREATION OF PALESTINIAN STATE

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INEVITABLE AND VIABLE PROPOSITION. BOTH WERE VAGUE AS TO HOW OR

WHERE STATE MIGHT EXIST AND BOTH HOPED SOMETHING COULD BE DONE TO PRESERVE HUSSEIN'S POSITION. LUBRANI THOUGHT HUSSEIN WAS PREPARING A SHOWDOWN WITH PALESTINIANS AND THAT SHAH INTENDED TO SIZE UP HUSSEIN'S PROSPECTS BEFORE HIS TALKS WITH SADAT.

C. FUTURE OF SAUDI ARABIA:

AMOUZEGAR AND LUBRANI FELT SAG A VERY FRAGILE REGIME WITH RATHER GOOD PROSPECTS FOR REPLACEMENT BY ANTI-WESTERN QADDAFI-TYPE. AMOUZEGAR THOUGHT CREATION OF SMALL PERSIAN GULF STATES HAD BEEN SERIOUS MISTAKE AND IMPLIED THAT EMIRATES SHOULD REGROUP THEMSELVES IN SOME LARGER ENTITY. BOTH HE AND LUBRANI THOUGHT PALESTINAIN STATE WOULD FOCUS STRONG PRESSURES ON PENINSULA STATES. LUBRANI THOUGHT IRAN WOULD INTERVENE ACROSS THE GULF SHOULD POLITICAL CHANGES APPEAR CONTRARY TO GOI INTERESTS.

D. MOOD OF IRANIAN PUBLIC:

ANSARY DESCRIBED PRESENT PERIOD AS "VERY DELICATE AND SENSITIVE", OWING TO HIGH IRANIAN EXPECTATIONS OF PERSONAL BENEFITS FROM OIL INCOME AND INFLATIONARY TENSIONS RESULTING FROM INJECTION OF LARGE SUMS OF NEW MONEY INTO ECONOMY. AMOUZEGAR DESCRIBED PROBLEMS OF GOI IN EVEN SHARPER TERMS, NOTING PERSONNEL AND PHYSICAL IMPEDIMENTS TO DEVELOPMENT AND FACT THAT URBAN INCOME IS SEVEN TIMES GREATER THAN RURAL. ANSARY SAID GOI WAS HANDLING SITUATION WITH GREAT CARE. BOTH HE AND AMOUZEGAR THOUGHT GOI HAD DONE REASONABLE JOB WITH SUBSIDIES ON BASIC COMMODITIES TO RESTRAIN INFLATION (NOW AT 12 PER CENT ACCORDING TO ANSARY) AND PROVIDE SOCIAL SERVICES. BOTH AGREED THERE HAD BEEN GRUMBLING BY SOME STUDENTS AND OTHERS OVER NEW IRANIAN FOREIGN AID PROGRAM WHILE DOMESTIC WANTS NOT SATISFIED. BOTH THOUGHT GOI HAD CONVINCED PUBLIC OF BROADER INTERESTS AT STAKE. LUBRANI WAS LESS OPTIMISTIC OR POSITIVE IN OUTLOOK. HE FEARED SHAH'S FORM OF "MEGALOMANIA" MIGHT LEAD HIM TO ORDER SOCIAL OR ECONOMIC PROGRAMS WHICH SUBORDINATES COULD NOT POSSIBLY HANDLE, THEREBY CREATING PUBLIC DISAPPOINTMENT. LUBRANI WAS ALSO WORRIED BY INCOME GAP AND REACTIONARY INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS. AMOUZEGAR MAINTAINED RELIGIOUS POWER ON DECLINE. IN SUMMARY, ALL THREE MEN DEPICTED INTERNAL SITUATION IN VARYING HUES LESS THAN ROSE COLOR ON POLITICAL SPECTRUM.

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